GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:672
ANSWERED ON:13.05.2002
IMPORT OF SOYABEAN OIL
GANGASANDRA SIDDAPPA BASAVARAJ;SUKDEO PASWAN

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Agriculture has laid down guidelines that imported soyabean oil should not be genetically modified;

(b) if so, by when the guidelines are likely to be enforced;

(c) whether distinguishing the genetically modified soyabean oil from the conventional (non-modified) soyabean oil is difficult through tests;

(d) if so, the manner in which the distinction is made between the two;

(e) whether the imported genetically modified soyabean oil is injurious for health;

(f) if so, the efforts being made by the Government to ban its import; and

(g) by when import of such oil is likely to be banned?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH)

(a) to (g): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (g) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.672 DUE FOR REPLY ON 13TH MAY, 2002.

(a) to (g): The Ministry of Agriculture has not laid down any guidelines regarding import of genetically modified Soyabean oil. The import of genetically modified product is governed by Rules framed under Environment Protection Act, 1986 which is handled by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Rule 11 of the Rules for the Manufacture, Use, import, export and storage of Hazardous Microorganisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells 1989 notified under EP Act 1986, provides that food stuffs, ingredients in food stuffs and additives including processing aids containing or consisting of genetically engineered organisms or cells, shall not be produced, sold, imported or used except with the approval of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC).

Distinction between genetically modified soyabean oil and non genetically modified soyabean oil is not possible by available analytical methods when the oils are refined. When oils are non refined very sophisticated and sensitive methods like Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) may enable the distinction. Refined GM Soya oil does not contain genetically modified protein and D.N.A.